Restructuring National Seeds Corporation of India

3256. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to restructure the National Seeds Corporation of India;

(b) what is the present operational activity of the National Seeds Corporation;

(c) whether it is a fact that various Committees have recommended a total restructuring of this Corporation;

(d) what role does Government see for the NSC in view of the new Agricultural Policy charting a course over the next 20 years; and

(e) the details of the present role and future role of the National Seeds Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) The Government of India have appointed M/s SBI Capital Market Ltd., Mumbai as Consultant to study re-organising and revitalizing of NSC.

(b) The present operational activity of the National Seeds Corporation is as under:—

* Organising production and distribution of foundation and certified seed of Cereals, Pulses, Fibre and Vegetable crops by supplementing the production by other agencies mainly through contract growers.
* Production and supply of seeds to North Eastern Region and other States whose topography is not conducive to seed production.
* Installation and operation of seed processing plants and seed storage structure.
* Preserving a buffer stock of seeds of principal crops.
* Training and education on seed.

(c) M/s Tata Consultancy Services were appointed as Operating Consultant in 1990 for conducting management study of the Corporation.

Based on the recommendations, structural changes like introduction of Voluntary Retirement Scheme to reduce surplus manpower and repayment of loans to Commercial Banks and Government of India has already been carried out.

(d) In order to fulfil the national endeavour of adequate and timely supply of quality seeds at reasonable prices to the farmers, the National Seeds Corporation will be restructured for efficient utilization of investment and manpower. The restructuring would be in terms of augmenting the infrastructure of production and distribution of improved varieties of quality seeds and planting material.

(e) The present role of the Corporation is:

* To produce and distribute seeds of high quality to the farmers.

* To bring about awareness among the farming community towards utilization of high quality seeds.

* Fulfilling a social obligation of producing and distributing seed of such crops which are not commercially profitable.

In future, the Corporation will aspire:—

* To be a leader in the field of production, multiplication, distribution and related activities in the area of quality seeds through efficient and optimum use of resources.

* To diversify the product mix in favour of high value-low volume seeds to further improve the profitability of the Corporation.

* To enter technology partnerships with internal and external organizations to promote high quality genetic material in seed production.

* To explore diversification to tissue culture, bio-technology etc.

Fertility of Agricultural Land

†3257. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the fertility of agricultural land is decreasing continuously;

(b) if so, whether Government are contemplating to take measures for increasing the fertility of agricultural land in various parts of the country; and

(c) if so, the outline thereof and if not, in which manner Government intend to solve this problem?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.